



Waltham on the Wolds Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120170
Local Authority Leicestershire
Inspection number 291653
Inspection date 18 October 2006
Reporting inspector Lois Furness

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Melton Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Waltham on the Wolds
Age range of pupils	4-10		Melton Mowbray LE14 4AJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01664 464269
Number on roll (school)	67	Fax number	01664 464269
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Diane Yates
		Headteacher	C P Townson
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This small rural primary school takes pupils from the local village as well as surrounding areas. There are three classes, all of which have pupils from more than one year group. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average but the proportion of pupils with a statement of educational need is above average. All pupils are of White British heritage. Pupils transfer to secondary education at the end of Year 5. The school offers daily wrap-around care facilities including an after-school club.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a happy, caring school that provides a satisfactory quality of education. A good feature of the school's work is the personal development and well-being of pupils which is good. Pupils enjoy school and want to be there. Attendance is good, as is behaviour, and the very few arguments between pupils are sorted out quickly. Parents are pleased with their children's positive attitudes to learning and when asked, pupils say, 'We give this school 10 out of 10!' These positive attitudes are brought about by a number of significant factors. Care, support and guidance are satisfactory and there is good commitment to pastoral care. The good relationships between staff and pupils and the supportive atmosphere ensure that pupils know that there is someone to talk to if they are concerned. They feel safe in school. Pupils appreciate how the school is adapting the curriculum to make it more interesting and exciting. Strong elements of this good curriculum are the promotion of personal, social and health education and citizenship, and enrichment activities, including visits, visitors and after-school clubs. For example, pupils benefit from the involvement of outside organisations which provide specialist support in music and sport. Satisfactory emphasis is given to pupils' academic development, and by Year 5 standards are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. In the past, writing has been a weaker element of learning but because of the focus on improving writing, this is now much better. Basic skills are taught adequately and these skills, alongside good personal qualities, mean that pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education. Satisfactory teaching and learning mean that pupils achieve appropriately. Teachers plan lessons carefully but they do not always plan activities that meet the range of abilities within the class. Pupils are not sufficiently clear about the learning that is expected of them and how to evaluate their success. Strengths in teaching are the use of interactive whiteboards and the work of learning support assistants. Through sensitive support, pupils who are vulnerable and those who have learning difficulties and disabilities are included well and make good progress. In the Foundation Stage, teaching and learning are satisfactory with an appropriate balance between child-led and adult-led activities.

The capacity to improve is satisfactory. School improvement planning identifies appropriate priorities although the checks on the quality of provision do not evaluate sufficiently well the effect of actions taken on pupils' achievement. The tracking of pupils' progress is insufficiently rigorous and the information available does not allow the school to check carefully enough how well pupils are learning. Because of these shortcomings the school has a too generous view of its overall effectiveness. Although leadership and management are satisfactory, subject leaders do not have a clear overview of what is working well or what needs to be improved in their subjects.

What the school should do to improve further

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- Ensure planned activities provide sufficient challenge for each ability group and pupils are clear about expected learning and how to achieve success.
- Bring added rigour to the systems for checking that pupils' progress is good enough.

- Ensure checking procedures focus clearly on how well actions improve pupils' achievement and enable subject leaders to know more about provision in their subject.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Children enter the Foundation Stage with standards that are expected for their age. However, this varies considerably from year to year because numbers are so small. They make satisfactory progress and by the time they enter Year 1 most of them reach the goals expected. By the end of Year 2 and Year 5, standards are broadly average and pupils make satisfactory progress. However, progress is uneven as teachers do not always use assessment information effectively enough to plan activities that are well matched to pupils' different abilities. Writing has been a recent area of concern but as a result of maximising opportunities for writing, for example through writing regularly in different subjects, standards have improved. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because of the good support that they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Behaviour is good in the Foundation Stage and this continues throughout the school. Children's improving self-confidence helps them to achieve well in the development of personal skills. Thereafter, good relationships between pupils and with adults continue to underpin good personal development. Pupils are happy and enthusiastic learners, who enjoy school. Attendance is above average. Pupils have good attitudes to their work and pupils say, 'Lessons are interesting and fun.' These positive attitudes please the parents. There are a few instances of silly behaviour by younger pupils but this is because their work lacks challenge. Older pupils report that arguments are infrequent and are quickly sorted out. Pupils know how to keep fit and healthy and have access to a wide range of healthy food at lunchtime. They understand the importance of regular exercise and know how to keep themselves safe.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments are good, with particular strengths in moral and social aspects. Pupils' close involvement with the local church, local organisations and charities demonstrate their commitment to the local community and society at large.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with some good features. Strengths include the use of interactive whiteboards which teachers use well to motivate and involve pupils. Learning support assistants know what is expected of them and they ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are included effectively in lessons. In the Foundation Stage resources are used well to support learning and the nursery nurse provides good support.

The quality of lesson planning is inconsistent and assessment information is not used as well as it should be to plan activities that challenge the different abilities within the class. This means that pupils do not consistently achieve as well as they should do. Also, the purpose of learning is not explained clearly and pupils have few opportunities to evaluate if they have achieved enough.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum reflects the school's recent drive to make it more interesting and creative. Although there has been good improvement there is inconsistency in the match of activities to different ability groups. In the Foundation Stage children are provided with a suitable balance of adult and child-led experiences covering all the required areas of learning. The introduction of interactive whiteboards is improving information and communication technology and is enlivening learning well. The programme of personal, social and health education and citizenship supports pupils' development effectively and helps them acquire important personal skills. Pupils say they enjoy what the school provides. Good use is made of links with other organisations, for example specialist music and sports provision strengthens the curriculum. Both parents and pupils value the good range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities that enrich learning opportunities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

All staff have a good understanding of the pupils' pastoral needs and work hard to provide a welcoming environment in which the pupils feel safe and secure. The caring ethos of the school promotes pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Pupils know that they can talk to staff if they are troubled. Arrangements for child protection and safeguarding vulnerable children are well established and staff are trained to meet the medical needs of pupils. The school is working to bring greater rigour to its procedures for health and safety. Systems to assess and track pupils' progress are in place. However, they are not rigorous enough to help accelerate pupils' progress or to show the pupils how well they are learning. The provision for pupils with learning needs and disabilities is good and fosters good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher provides clear direction and knows what needs to be done to improve learning. The school improvement plan identifies the right priorities and all staff and governors are involved in formulating this plan. However, subject leaders do not have enough responsibility for achievement in their subjects and are insufficiently involved in checking and evaluating strengths and weaknesses. Governors provide considerable support and visit the school regularly. Although they ask questions about provision they are less clear about how they check that the school is successful.

The school's approach to self-evaluation lacks precision and does not focus sufficiently on how well pupils' learning and achievement is improved by the actions taken. For example, observations of the quality of teaching and learning in lessons are not used to inform teachers about how to improve learning. However, the school is on the right track to bring greater focus to the strengthening of pupils' achievement as shown by the recent improvements in writing.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Waltham on the Wolds Primary School, Melton Road, Waltham on the Wolds, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, LE14 4AJ

Thank you for your friendly welcome during our recent visit to your school. We enjoyed talking to you, listening to your views and seeing how well you work in lessons. We think your school is giving you a satisfactory education.

- The things that we particularly liked are
- We know why you enjoy school and are pleased to write in the report that your school is a happy, caring place to be.
- Your curriculum is interesting and the visits, visitors and clubs are extras that we know you appreciate.
- It is good to know that the adults take good care of you and you say you feel safe in school.
- Most of the time you behave well.
- We think that the few of you who find learning difficult are given good support and make good progress.
- What we have asked the school to do now
- We have asked your teachers to make sure your work is always hard enough, to explain what you are to learn and give you chances to check you are succeeding.
- We think that that your teachers should check your progress more often.
- We also think that teachers should have more opportunities to find out what works well and what needs to be improved.

We hope you continue to work hard and enjoy your time in school.